

DIRECTOR'S ARTISTIC STATEMENT

TITLE

From tunnels underneath the Harz Mountains, where camp inmates assembled Nazi V2 rockets in hellish conditions, Werner Von Braun's path continued across the American NASA to the surface of the Moon. The long and bloody road to the Moon.

HOW THE STORY WILL BE SHOWN

The protagonist is Boris Nemec, who narrates the story of his father. Parts of his father's story will be illustrated by animation, with animated parts shown 5 times, one minute for each. The animations illustrate events before the Second World War and those from camp life, specific events that do not exist in the archives but are testimonies of survivors. The animator will be recently awarded Brazilian, Ricardo Kump.

The cantata *Ravensbrück Camp* by Slovenian Alojz Ajdič serves to paint the atmosphere, in this case depressing, filled with horror, with the experience of senseless suffering. The sonority of modernism is here closely intertwined with the experience of a cataclysm. It will be accompanied by archival footage of the camps and contemporary "floating" footage of the sites where these events once took place. Today, everything has been demolished, overgrown with lush vegetation; how strange, isn't it? It is as if nothing had happened here, let alone something so terrible.

Survivor testimonies are kept by various state archives and foundations, such as the Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora Memorials Foundation, and Steven Spielberg's Shoah, which is a largely unexplored source of material. We have already accompanied Boris Nemec to Buchenwald and Dora last year as part of our research for this film, and have conducted test shoots. In addition to researching Boris's personal story and that of his family, we have also explored archives and contacted researchers.

In the film, I will pay tribute to a fellow countryman, the recently deceased writer Boris Pahor, and in particular his *Necropolis*, the world's central literary work describing the terror in the camps. Last year, illustrator and comic book artist Jurij Devetak presented the *Necropolis* in a graphic novel. These illustrations will be animated in the film, with the main passages from *Necropolis* narrated.

Graphic animation of the maps will provide a geographical overview and a better understanding of the places, cities, landscapes where the crimes took place.

Behind the scenes are concrete people with interesting fates. One of them is Werner Von Braun. A special chapter in the film will be devoted to Operation Paperclip, when the US government smuggled more than 1,500 Nazis onto its soil to be used in its strategic plans. Similarly, on the other side, the Red Army brought 2,500 Nazis onto its soil to exploit their technical know-how for its own purposes with Operation Osoaviakhim.

When the Berlin Wall came down, the phrase “No more walls and no more wars” was very popular. The film ends with footage of wars being fought around the world today. We do not need to go to Mexico or Finland to build new walls; we have walls, renamed as “technical barriers”, on our own borders.

PERSONAL MOTIVATION

While filming my documentary *Sparks in Time* I met Boris Nemec, from Šempeter in Nova Gorica, Slovenia. In 2019 he told me about his father, whom he had lost when he was just four months old. His father died in the camp near Buchenwald.

Initially I did not pay much attention to that story, but later I got to know Boris and his pain from up close. The fact that he had never met his father marked him for life. For years he has been a member of national and foreign Combatants' Unions, and is actively involved in these organizations. That his father was killed not by the occupier but by the liberator has further affected him, and he uncompromisingly defends anti-war thinking

and action, and the equality of all peoples. Boris's powerful story, linked to contemporary fear-mongering and lies, the regeneration of the Wall, the media's ignorance of the harmful actions of the politicians responsible, the incitement to a new war, the complete lack of interest in peace... were the inspiration for this film.

CURRENT RELEVANCE OF THE DOCUMENTARY

The Nordhausen 1945 study, commissioned by the municipality of Nordhausen in 2019, is proof that the Second World War is not a thing of the distant past. The events surrounding the attack by the British Air Force, which cremated the town and, with it, its (Allied) camp inmates when the war was already over, have not been sufficiently investigated. The expert commission re-examining the bombing of Nordhausen one week before liberation will present its study in a few months' time. We also want to expose atrocities committed by the Allied armies during the liberation of Europe.

Every reflection and vocal statement against the violence of war is extremely important and necessary in light of the current war on European soil! We want to firmly state that war is always evil. One must repeat these words over and over again: **war is evil.**